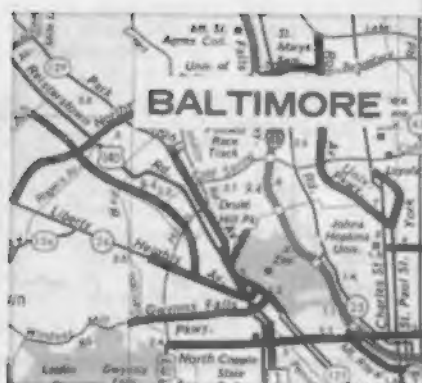


YESTERDAY'S MEMORIES

"dedicated to the history of R&B music"

Vol. 1 No. 4

Issue 4 \$1.00



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WE THREE

With this issue, Yesterday's Memories is devoting the entire magazine to vocal groups from the Washington, D.C./Baltimore area.

A great deal of research has been conducted on groups from the major cities of New York, Los Angeles, and Philadelphia. But most of the groups from around the Nation's capital - including some of the major R&B groups from the period - have been overlooked in the past.

Les Moskowitz, of Roadhouse Records, was instrumental in enabling us to contact and meet most of the group members interviewed for these articles. We extend our warmest thanks for his assistance and hospitality; and wish him continued success with Roadhouse Records, which has provided R&B collectors with many previously unreleased masterpieces.

Also, with this issue, we are enclosing a survey to determine the interests of our current, and potential, readers. We would greatly appreciate your taking the effort to respond to the questionnaire. In this way, we will be better able to provide the content and balance which you'd like to see in Yesterday's Memories.

As we go to press, we find that there are many fine groups that we just didn't have room for. Their stories will appear in future issues.

Much of the discographical information in Yesterday's Memories is stolen verbatim from Ferdie Gonzalez' indispensable book, "The Disco-File," which we at YM enthusiastically endorse.

Your subscription ends with the number in the upper right hand corner of the label on our envelope.

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INTRODUCTION - THE BALTIMORE / D.C. SCENE

By Dave Hinckley

Those who tire of saying "rhythm and blues vocal harmony groups" sometimes refer to the music simply as the "New York sound."

There is a lot of truth in the phrase. In the early and mid-1950's, New York was the center of the vocal group universe. It had the most labels. It had the Apollo Theater. Most simply, but most importantly, it had the most music: groups far too numerous to list, although not to enjoy. New York was the IBM of the field: the competition, however good, was behind in the race.

Still, there were other places where vocal groups formed and sang and made records which still spark desperate scrambles 20 years later. The West Coast axis of Los Angeles and San Francisco was one, Chicago was another. Philadelphia and Detroit were important. And so was Baltimore-Washington, on which this issue of Yesterday's Memories will focus. The groups aren't all household names - but then, they usually got together because they liked to sing, not because they expected worldwide fame.

Two groups from the Baltimore-Washington area actually approached that status: The Clovers and The Orioles. Lesser successes came to The Marylanders, Cardinals, Swallows, Cap-Tans, Jets, Rainbows, etc.

But even beyond those who achieved some fame, there is ample evidence the area was simply a place where a lot of R&B vocal group singing went on, as part of people's everyday lives.

The reason for the music's popularity needn't be analyzed any more deeply than to say people liked it. But there are several logical reasons it caught on in that place, at that time.

First, both cities were well on their way to becoming Black: by 1950, Baltimore was more than 20 per cent Black, Washington more than 35 per cent, with the percentages rising sharply and visibly. R&B vocal group harmony was, and is, basically a Black urban music. Most of the immigrating Blacks were from the South, and brought with them strong musical roots - in many cases the gospel harmony music with which group R&B is so closely connected.

Second, large chunks of both cities have traditionally been ethnic neighborhoods. These neighborhoods are basically residential but they have enough services (stores and the like) that people don't have to leave to survive. The services include, of course, the corner bar, club or tavern, which becomes the social center - especially for Blacks who weren't even allowed in many downtown clubs in the 1950's.

On nights and weekends, everyone in the neighborhood could go to the club, to talk, drink, be entertained or start a fight. Ahmet Ertegun of Atlantic Records remembers hearing Dinah Washington in a Southeast Washington club whose patrons would regularly "rip it apart." The owners apparently shrugged just as regularly and put it back together.

These clubs naturally loved young local singers, who would already be known in the neighborhood and who would work cheap. The singers just as naturally loved the clubs, which gave them a chance to succeed in front of their friends and maybe start in show business. So what if it wasn't much money - just the idea of getting paid to sing was pretty impressive.

Harold Lucas of The Clovers recalls the group working the Rose Club (7th and T Street, Washington) on the midnight - 9 A.M. shift, for \$5.00 apiece in tips.

The R&B vocal group was particularly ideal for the smaller places, because it did not take up as much space as the traditional nightclub orchestra or band and its instruments. This was such a concern, in fact, that in October 1952 WWDC disc jockey Willis Conover announced he was forming his own big band because Washington was "completely without music to dance to." He lamented that local musical tastes were dominated by "single vocalists, specialty musicians and small groups."

Neither Washington nor Baltimore (the "Block" notwithstanding) is much noted for night life anyway, and with segregation keeping most of it white well into the 1950's, there was a wide-open field for small ethnic clubs.

A third factor working for R&B was a natural breeding ground: the Black schools. Segregation produced these schools, which naturally began to reflect Black culture. Just like in New York, four or five kids would sing in the hallways or bathrooms, moving outside to the corner when classes ended. School talent shows and dances, both popular, were the showcases for these groups, steps which could lead to the neighborhood club circuit.

Those who dreamed of the big time could gaze at Washington's Howard or Baltimore's Royal Theater, both keystones of the "Chitlin' Circuit." Harold Lucas recalls that soon after the failure of The Clovers' first record (YES SIR THAT'S MY BABY on Rainbow - "never made it off 14th Street," he concedes), he took his wife to see The Five Keys at The Howard and told her, "I'm gonna be up there some day." (She reportedly replied, "Oh, yeah?")

R&B was largely live music, so the theaters and clubs were its main bloodstream. But there were also R&B radio stations and records: the 78's they played on the radio could be found in hundreds of neighborhood barber shops, hardware stores and groceries as well as record stores. (Baltimore-Washington record sales were surveyed by Billboard for its R&B section, and those surveys contain some interesting if inconclusive indications. The July 11, 1953, survey, for instance, shows New York's R&B top six with three Nat King Cole records and only one vocal group - The Du Droppers. The Baltimore-Washington section has four vocal group records in the top six, including I COVER THE WATERFRONT by The Orioles.)

But aspiring R&B vocal groups in the Baltimore-Washington area had one monumental obstacle: their Chicago, LA or New York counterparts didn't, and that problem was so severe it probably doomed hundreds of talented voices to obscurity: THE AREA NEVER HAD A SIGNIFICANT RECORD COMPANY!

"Who's Who In Rock 'N' Roll" (1958) lists 66 labels, from all over the Country; none were from Baltimore or Washington.

Some groups did find ways to break into recording, of course, Lillian Claiborne, who owned a record shop, helped The Heartbreakers and others. Max Silverman of the Quality Music Shop (later more famous for and as

(Cont'd. on p. 30)

the Rainbows

By Marvin H. Podd

(Based on conversations with Ronald Miles, John Berry, Henry Womble and Reese Palmer)

In 1951 a group of five Washington, D.C. youngsters, from the Lincoln Heights area, who called themselves The Serenaders were practicing their harmony, hoping to become a popular singing group and to get a recording contract. The group consisted of Henry "Lamont" Mont (lead), Henry "Shorty" Womble (first tenor), Frank "Jake" Hardy (bass), Leroy Henderson (baritone) and Robert Neil (second tenor and lead). This group did not appear on wax until their practice tapes were issued in 1973-74. When The Serenaders broke up in March 1953, Henry Mont joined The Carusos, who later recorded as The Harlequins (Juanita), Leroy Henderson joined The Topps, an offshoot of The Heartbreakers (Red Robin), Robert Neil joined The Phelps Playboys (never recorded) and both Henry Womble and Frank Hardy joined The Rainbows.

The sextet who recorded MARY LEE for Bobby Robinson's Red Robin label were: Ronald "Poosie" Miles (lead and second tenor), John "J.B." Berry (lead and second tenor), Frank "Jake" Hardy (bass), Henry "Shorty" Womble (first tenor), James "Sally" Nolan (baritone) and Donald Watts (piano). They decided to try their luck at one of the New York record companies, and wound up at Bobby Robinson's. He turned them down flat! Tired and disgusted, they returned to D.C. to practice. About a year later, broke and hungry, they went back to Robinson. When The Rainbows sang their own arrangement of HONEY HUSH and an original composition called EVENING, Billy

Ward's cousin, who happened to be present, convinced Bobby Robinson to record them (although he didn't really need too much convincing at that point). While preparations for the recording were taking place, the group fooled around with another original composition entitled MARY LEE. Robinson was so impressed that he had them record that and HONEY HUSH was never released. MARY LEE was composed as a joke about somebody's girl friend, Marion Lee, who was the only female permitted to come to rehearsals.

If you listen closely to MARY LEE, you will notice that there are two interchanging lead singers. Following Donald's great piano introduction Ronald starts the vocalizing with that now famous MARY LEE refrain and he does all subsequent refrains while John sings the main lyric. However, it is Henry who gets in the last word as he puts the falsetto lid on the song. John sings lead on EVENING. Ronald recalls that MARY LEE was very popular in 1955 and that it was reissued in 1956 by Boston's Pilgrim label. Henry's recording career ended with MARY LEE because he went off to prep school and college. He did, however, make occasional appearances with the group when he was on vacation or home for the weekend. The Rainbows' second recording, SHIRLEY, featured Ronald and John again, but reversing their parts. That is, John sang the SHIRLEY refrain while Ronald sang the main lyric. MARY LEE and EVENING were sold or leased to Pilgrim by Bobby Robinson.



(LEFT) THE RAINBOWS (1955):
James Nolan, Ronald Miles, John
Berry, Henry Womble, Frank Hardy
(BOT) Donald Watts

(RIGHT) THE RAINBOWS (1956):
(TOP) John Berry, Ronald
Miles
(BOT) Chester Simmons, Don
Covay



(LEFT) THE LATER MOONGLOWS (1959):
Harvey Fuqua at bottom, others as
marked

SHIRLEY and STAY were not recorded for Robinson, but were done at a New York studio and through the efforts of manager Jay Perry, were released on George Ween and Cecil Stein's Pilgrim label.

Other personnel changes occurred before this recording and two of John Berry's friends, Don "Pretty Boy" Covay and Chester Simmons, joined Ronald and John to form the quartet that has been depicted in previous pictures and stories. This group also recorded THEY SAY at 4 A.M. in the same studio at which The Cleftones had just cut some sides. On THEY SAY a 16 year old Chester sings bass, Ronald sings lead, John is first tenor and Don does baritone. After THEY SAY met with the same lack of success as SHIRLEY, and because The Rainbows had received so little money for their hit record, MARY LEE, the group broke up. In 1960 MARY LEE was reissued on the Fire label with the label reading "featuring Sonny Spencer," a pseudonym for John Berry. Don Covay recorded for Atlantic in mid-1957 under the name "Pretty Boy;" The Rainbows were not backing him up.

The rumors that Billy Stewart and Marvin Gaye sang with The Rainbows arose from the fact that they all were friends and they occasionally appeared with The Rainbows when an original member was sick or could not make a show. The Rainbows' managers were originally Que Martyn and "Hamp" Hampton, at whose aunt's house the group rehearsed. They were present at the time of MARY LEE. A later manager was D.C. DJ Jay Perry, who had them at his record hops and got them the Pilgrim and Rama recording deals. Marvin Gaye appeared with The Rainbows at some of the Perry record hops.

In 1957 James Nolan and Chester Simmons joined a group called The Marquees (WYATT EARP on Okeh). The other members of the group were old friends who

had often sung with The Rainbows on tour; Reese Palmer and Marvin Gaye. Another friend was Bobby Hawkins, who sometimes sang with the group, but didn't record with them. The Marquees were discovered and backed up on record by Bo Diddley, who was living in Washington, D.C. at the time. They remained under Bo's wing until a night in 1958 when The Moonglows were making their final appearance together at The Howard Theater. Harvey Fuqua called for auditions for a new group of Moonglows and The Marquees were the first and last group he listened to. Harvey took The Marquees plus Chuck Barksdale of The Dells and made them the new Moonglows (TWELVE MONTHS OF THE YEAR and MAMA LOOCIE). Marvin does the talking introduction to TWELVE MONTHS and sings lead on MAMA LOOCIE.

In 1958 John Berry cut a demo entitled IF YOU SEE MARY LEE. This has recently been released on the Firefly label. Although billed as The Rainbows, the group consisted of Berry, John Garfield and two others remembered only as Freddy and Gabriel.

Ronald formed another group of Rainbows in 1961 who recorded for Dave Glascoe's Dave label. In addition to Ronald, the other members of this group were Joseph A. Walls (tenor), Duval L. Potter (tenor), Layton D. McDonald (baritone), Victor A. English (bass, baritone), Alvin Saunders (guitar) and Walter McDonald (drums). While in the Air Force, Ron met Layton McDonald and Joe Walls, each of whom had a singing group. (They all competed in the Air Force "Tops in Blues" contest.) Since they were all from the D.C. area, plans were made to re-form The Rainbows after their enlistments were up.

At the same time, Chester Simmons had continued hanging around Bo Diddley's house, where he met two former members of The Carousels, Duval Potter and



THE RAINBOWS (Ca. 1962):

(TOP) Joe Walls, Victor English, Duval Potter

(BOT) Ron Miles, Alvin Saunders, Layton McDonald



THE RAINBOWS (Ca. 1965):

(TOP) Victor English, Duval Potter, Joe Walls

(BOT) Layton McDonald, Walter McDonald, Ron Miles



THE RAINBOWS (1975):

(TOP) Joe Walls, Donald Watts, Duval Potter, Victor English

(BOT) Layton McDonald, Ron Miles

Victor English. When Ron returned, Chester got them all together and once again there was a Rainbows group on the D.C. scene. This group is still going strong today and is intact except for the guitarist. Their repertoire includes slightly modified versions of MARY LEE, EVENING and THEY SAY. Ronald is also singing in a gospel group, The Anita Jones Singers.

Don Covay cut some singles and had some groups backing him up, but is more popular today than in the 50's and 60's. John Berry and Chester Simmons are in different ends of the music

business today - John was, until recently, working with Don Covay, and Chester is talent coordinator at Reflection Sound Studios in Charlotte, North Carolina. Chester also produces talent for his own company, Mark-Pro. He is presently working with Reese Palmer's group, The Choice Of Colour. Donald Watts has a jazz trio that's supposed to be dynamite. Henry Womble is at the Department of Human Resources, working with adolescents and young adults; John Berry is now a co-worker. Frank Hardy drives a truck. James Nolan is living in Louisville, Kentucky■

RAINBOWS DISCOGRAPHY

RED ROBIN	134	MARY LEE (JB/RM)/EVENING (JB)	6/55
PILGRIM	703	MARY LEE/EVENING (REISSUE)	2/56
	711	SHIRLEY(RM/JB)/STAY(JB/DC)	6/56
RAMA	209	THEY SAY(RM)/MINNIE(JB)	12/56
FIRE	1012	MARY LEE/EVENING (REISSUE)	3/60
ARGYLE	1012	SHIRLEY/STAY (REISSUE)	1962
DAVE	908	I KNOW(DP)/ONLY A PICTURE(JW)	1963
	909	IT WOULDN'T BE RIGHT(RM)/FAMILY MONKEY(JW)	1963

LEADS: JB=JOHN BERRY, RM=RONALD MILES,DC=DON COVAY, DP=DUVAL POTTER, JW=JOE WALLS

RELATED GROUPS' DISCOGRAPHY

ROADHOUSE 1006 SOLDIER IN KOREA
5 VULTURES(SERENADERS) LONESOME

ROADHOUSE 1017 KOLA
SERENADERS GOODBYE

ROADHOUSE 1018 MY HAPPINESS
SERENADERS ROCKIN' MAN

ROADHOUSE 1022 SUNSET
SERENADERS

BARON 105 CAN'T YOU SEE I LOVE YOU
RAINBOWS(SERENADERS)

OKEH 7095 BILLY'S HEARTACHES
BILLY STEWART(BACKED BY MARQUEES) BABY, YOU
ARE MY ONLY LOVE

OKEH 7096 WYATT EARP
MARQUEES HEY LITTLE SCHOOLGIRL

CHECKER 914
BO DIDDLEY(BACKED BY MARQUEES) I'M SORRY

CHESS 1725 TWELVE MONTHS OF THE YEAR HARVEY FUQUA
HARVEY(NEW MOONGLOWS) DON'T BE AFRAID TO LOVE HARVEY FUQUA

CHESS 1738 UNEMPLOYMENT
HARVEY & MOONGLOWS MAMA LOOCIE

FIREFLY 313 IF YOU SEE MARY LEE
THE RAINBOWS

LEADS

HENRY MONT/ROBERT NEIL
(RECORDED IN 1952, RE-
LEASED 1973)

HENRY MONT/ROBERT NEIL
(RELEASED 1974)

HENRY MONT/ROBERT NEIL
(RELEASED 1974)

HENRY MONT/ROBERT NEIL
(RELEASED 1974)

LEROY HENDERSON
(RELEASED 1973)

REESE PALMER
REESE PALMER

MARVIN GAYE

JOHN BERRY
(RECORDED 1958)

1957

1957

1958

1959

1959

1975

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| | 117 | I Had A Dream/Strawberry Peak - Jewels |
| | 118 | Take Me As I Am/Sally, The Cosmetic Queen - Notemakers |
| | 119 | Everybody's Somebody's Fool/Moonlight - Hi-Lites |
| | 120 | Zoom Zoom Zoom/To The Aisle - Hi-Lites |
| | 121 | Maybe You'll Be There/Pretty Face - Hi-Lites |
| | 122 | Zoop - The Hi-Lites/Baby Baby - Jose & Aztecs |
| | 123 | My Aching Heart/Why Did She Leave Me - Jose & Aztecs |
| | 124 |unissued Jaguars coming soon |
| | 125 | Your Love Is Just Plain Good/Cottage By The Sea - Incas |
| | 126 | The Time For Love/A Wink and A Grin - Incas |
| | 127 | You've Gone/Sweet Lucy - Incas |

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THE SWALLOWS



By Marv Goldberg and Mike Redmond
Based on an interview with Frederick Johnson
and Bill Levinson

The origin of The Swallows goes back to 1946, when a sextet of 13 year olds from Baltimore formed a group called The Oakaleers. They were composed of: Lawrence Coxson (lead tenor), Irving Turner (tenor and baritone), Earl Hurley (first and second tenor and bongos), Herman "Junior" Denby (second tenor, baritone and string bass), Frederick "Money Guitar" Johnson (baritone and guitar), and Morris "Bunky" Mack (bass - also played piano, guitar and drums). As was often the case with groups from the period, they were a self-contained unit in terms of vocals and instrumental (small combo) accompaniment.

The young Oakaleers practiced on street corners and made the rounds of the amateur shows which were popular at the time. Earl Hurley lived across the street from Sonny Til, and The Oakaleers greatly admired The up-and-coming Vibra-Naires (as The Orioles were originally called). Therefore, The Orioles had an influence on another group even before they themselves recorded.

At some point in their developing career, Lawrence Coxson left The Oakaleers and lead tenor Eddie Rich joined. Coxson was later to be used as a fill-in for personal appearances.

A name change also took place and The Swallows were born. The name was suggested by Fred Johnson's mother, drawing the inspiration from her favorite song by The Ink Spots: WHEN THE SWALLOWS COME BACK TO CAPIS-TRANO. This also served as their theme song, but they never got around to record it (primarily because of The Dominoes' hit version). Andy Magruder, of The 5 Blue Notes, remembers The Swallows stealing the show from Pearl Bailey at The Howard Theater in Washington with the tune.

The Swallows developed an act that brought them bookings long before they ever recorded. They first appeared as The Swallows at Eddie Leonard's Spa Musical Bar in the late 1940's. They played local clubs and theaters and also appeared with Alan Freed in a show in Cleveland.

Through the reputation they developed, The Swallows were brought to the attention of Jack Gale, a local radio announcer. Gale contacted Bill Levinson who ultimately managed the group in partnership with Ike Goldstick, the owner of a record shop. Through his contacts within the music industry, Goldstick was able to get The Swallows bookings at local nightclubs. A King label representative went into Goldstick's store one day, heard about The Swallows, and arranged for an audition. The group made such an impression that A&R man Henry Glover was called in to listen to them, and signed The Swallows for the King label.

At that point the group was a sextet: Johnson, Hurley, Rich, Denby, Mack and Turner. King suggested that they reduce the group to a quintet because it was easier to book a five-man group - and Turner was the most expendable (he subsequently returned as a full-time member about 1953).

The Swallows' first session took place around May of 1951 at which time they recorded DEAREST and WILL YOU BE MINE, which turned

out to be their biggest record. The haunting piano on many of their releases was played by Sonny "Long-Gone" Thompson, who was the mainstay of the King studio band.

At the time, none of the members could read music. Denby would compose a tune, teach it to the rest of the group, and then they would work with arranger Billy Conrad, who would write the charts, so that the song could be copyrighted.

They stayed with King until at least late 1952, turning out some of the most beautiful music in the annals of Rhythm and Blues. Eddie Rich was the usual lead on the early sides and Junior Denby took over that spot later on (see discography). As far as can be determined, the recording personnel on all the King sides were: Eddie Rich, Junior Denby, Earl Hurley, Money Johnson and Bunky Mack.

In 1954, their manager at the time got them the one-shot deal with After Hours. By this time the group was once again a sextet. Junior Denby had gone into the service and was replaced by Herman Williams for a couple of months, and then by Irving Turner. Al France had replaced Bunky Mack and 2nd tenor Dee Ernie Bailey (also known as "Barefoot Bill") was added. MY BABY was done in the usual Swallows' style & has the following personnel: Earl Hurley (lead on MY BABY), Eddie Rich, Dee Ernie Bailey, Irving Turner, Money Johnson (lead on GOOD TIME GIRLS), and Al France.

By 1956, Al France had been replaced by Edward "Buddy" Crawford and Irving Turner by Bobby Hendricks. By about September of that year, Hendricks and Bailey had left to sing with Bill Pinkney in The Flyers and The Swallows were pretty much out of business.

The Swallows had done some back-up work for Junior Denby when he recorded as a single for King. One of these cuts, DEED I DO, has recently been released. A King studio group had also done some back-up work behind The Swallows, on occasion, as fill-in voices.

The Swallows finally disbanded because too many personnel changes had destroyed the initial enthusiasm and dedication of the original members.

In 1957, another Swallows group was formed, which released four records on King's Federal subsidiary. Their story is the subject of the companion article, "The New Swallows Are Born."

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THE SWALLOWS(1951):
Earl Hurley, Frederick
Johnson, Eddie Rich, Norris
Mack, Herman Denby

SWALLOWS DISCOGRAPHY

KING

- 4458 DEAREST (ER)/WILL YOU BE MINE (ER) 6/51
4466 SINCE YOU'VE BEEN AWAY (ER)
/WISHING FOR YOU (ER) 1951
4501 ETERNALLY (ER)/IT AIN'T THE MEAT (NM) 1951
4515 TELL ME WHY (ER)
/ROLL, ROLL, PRETTY BABY (NM) 1/52
4525 BESIDE YOU (HD)/YOU LEFT ME (ER) 4/52
4533 I ONLY HAVE EYES FOR YOU (HD)
/YOU WALKED IN (HD) 5/52
4579 WHERE DO I GO FROM HERE (HD)
/PLEASE BABY PLEASE (HD) 12/52
4612 OUR LOVE IS DYING (HD)/LAUGH (HD) 1953
4632 NOBODY'S LOVIN' ME (HD)
/BICYCLE TILLIE (NM) 1953

- 4656 TRUST ME (ER)/PLEADING BLUES (FJ) 1953
4676 I'LL BE WAITING (ER)
/IT FEELS SO GOOD (FJ) 1953

AFTER HOURS

- 104 MY BABY (EH)/GOOD TIME GIRLS (FJ) 1954

FEDERAL

- 12319 ANGEL BABY (CK)/OH LONESOME ME (CK) 2/58
12328 ROCK-A-BYE BABY ROCK (ALL)
/WE WANT TO ROCK (ALL) 1958
12329 BESIDE YOU (CK)/LAUGHING BOY (CK) 1958
12333 WHO KNOWS DO YOU (CK)
/ITCHY TWITCHY FEELING (CK) 8/58

LEADS: ER=EDDIE RICH; NM=NORRIS MACK;
FJ=FREDERICK JOHNSON; EH=EARL HURLEY;
HD=HERMAN DENBY; CK=CALVIN KOLLETTE

THE SWALLOWS (Ca. 1955):

Frederick Johnson, Earl
Hurley, Eddie Rich, William
"Ace" Thomas, Edward Crawford,
Irving Turner. (Thomas, the
group's drummer, had formerly
been their valet.)

PHOTO COURTESY OF PHIL GROIA &
WILLIE WINFIELD.



THE *Federal* SWALLOWS

THE NEW SWALLOWS ARE BORN

By Phil Chaney

After the demise and fall of The Swallows (of King label fame) the group came back to Baltimore and went their separate ways. All except Eddie Ricks (Ritt) (Rich) - I never did ask him what the true spelling was. He joined up with The Honey Boys, another local group and did night club shots around town.

Money Johnson picked up a few bucks playing his axe with a combo known as The Jumpin' Jaguars. The other guys just hung out or moved out of the area.

Around late 1957 The Honey Boys broke up so Eddie and Calvin Kollette, the lead singer of The Honey Boys teamed up with The Jumpin' Jaguars as a duet, still doing club work. One night The Jaguars were booked at a cabaret, The Alcazar, with another Baltimore group called The Capitols. Well, only two members of The Capitols showed up (Buddy Bailey and Larry Jones); man, the promoter was frantic. He had billed three vocal groups and two bands (the other was Mickey Fields and The Tilters). They had the bands and a duet but no groups. So, when Eddie and Khaki (Calvin Kollette) spied Earl Hurley in the club, after a few minutes they had him backstage working out a few numbers.

Now they had one group consisting of: Eddie Rich, Khaki Kollette, Earl Hurley, Buddy Bailey and Money Johnson. The second member of The Capitols, Larry Jones, was miffed at being left out; he came to sing. So Eddie came over to our table where John Billy, Diason Stokes, Roland Jackson (all former members of The Honey Boys), and myself were sitting. Eddie told John he had a lead singer if he and "Dixon" and "Big Boy" would

back him up. They said they would try, so backstage he went. After a few songs, they had another group consisting of John Billy, Diason (Dixon) Stokes, Roland (Big Boy) Jackson and Larry Jones.

"This is mad," I told them. "You'll never pull it off. Everybody out there knows who you are." Eddie, forever the optimist, said, "we'll do it anyway. It's better than no groups at all."

Anyway, history was not made that night, but the show was very successful. The new Swallows came back for two encores and The Honey Boys had a new lead singer. Larry Jones had a great high tenor voice. He sounded a lot like Ted Taylor. After the show, Eddie, Khaki, Earl, Buddy and Money decided to stick together and try for the big time again. They practiced a lot of up-tempo songs, as the ballad days were nearly over.

The owner of the club they were working (a joint called "Tillie's") had a thing for Country and Western songs. So as a joke, the guys started doing OH LONESOME ME as the last number of the last set.

In 1958 they figured they were ready to record, so after a call to their old label, they were invited by King Records for an audition. I guess King was impressed because they released OH LONESOME ME on the Federal label backed with ANGEL BABY (#12319), another country-flavored song. The next release (#12328) WE WANT TO ROCK backed with ROCK-A-BYE BABY were two songs that every group in Baltimore used to practice. (It was like HEY CHIQUITA which Gene Pearson of The Rivileers claimed all the New York groups used for

COR^RRECTIONS

practice.) They did nothing. On the next shot (#12329) the old Swallows' side, BESIDE YOU, was dragged out of moth balls and juiced up 1959 style. This was backed with LAUGHIN' BOY another mediocre side. The final release (#12333) was WHO KNOWS DO YOU b/w ITCHY TWITCHY FEELING.

WHO KNOWS DO YOU had great possibilities, but Federal elected to push the Bobby Hendricks' cover of ITCHY TWITCHY FEELING. So a very good ballad was lost in obscurity. On most of the Federal sides, including WHO KNOWS DO YOU, they spell Khaki's name "Rowlette" for reasons unknown to me.

So again The Swallows came home, this time to stay. Although they had minor success on the Federal label, The Swallows were through. Unlike Steve Propes wrote in his book "Oldies But Goodies" - he stated the Federal group was a poor Rock & Roll group and should be avoided - the group was not poor, the material was poor. Had Federal Records recorded them as they sounded that night at the Alcazar, the records would've been much sought after. However, BESIDE YOU and WHO KNOWS DO YOU - deserve a spin. There were three original Swallows' members in that group and I wouldn't call them poor Rock & Roll.

Calvin (Khaki) Kollette is now deceased as is Earl Hurley. Eddie Ritts is still knocking around as are Buddy Bailey and Money Johnson. They are not singing anymore professionally, but every once in a while, Eddie will grab a mike at Al Browne's club here in Baltimore and go through some of the old ones. He still sounds great. All he needs is another time period or another group. It might happen again. Who knows, do you? ■

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An addition to The Beavers' discography (issue 2): THAT LUCKY OLD SUN/IF MY DREAM WOULD COME TRUE - Herb Lance (Beavers in background) - Sittin' In With 524 (thanks to Doug Seroff). Also concerning The Beavers' article - Paul Kapp was also the manager of The Shadows.

From Picky Pete Grendysa, the following for issue #3: In The Hollywood Flames' discography, Fidelity 3002 should read - Sherman Williams Orchestra - THE BOUNCE ("A" side)/Sherman Williams Orchestra, vocal by The Four Flames ("B" side). In The Strangers' article, we gave the formation of DeLuxe as being in the "mid-1940's." It was actually started before King, in 1942. Regarding The Cues' discography-Atlantic back-up work - Joe Turner - #1088 and #1100 should read "(label only credits chorus & orchestra)." Thanks, Pete.

Gino Williams has some additions to The Hollywood Flames' discography (which check out with Bobby Byrd): Aladdin 3162 - MY HEART IS FREE AGAIN/MIDNIGHT (Patty Anne backed by Flames); Aladdin 3280 - SHTIGGY BOOM (Patty Anne backed by Flames) - flip is a Patty Anne solo; the flip of Class 231 (GEE WHIZ) is WHEN SHE WALKS ■

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the 5 Blue Notes



By Marv Goldberg & Mike Redmond
Based on an interview with Andy Magruder

It's been said that The 5 Blue Notes are one of the leading exponents of the "Chicago Sound" but the group had no roots in Chicago, and, in fact, hailed from the Washington area.

The origin of The 5 Blue Notes goes back to 1950 when Andy Magruder was a seventh grade student at Francis Junior High School in Georgetown, Maryland. Andy formed a group called the "Bluejays" which was composed of Andy Magruder (lead), Waymond Mooney (1st tenor), Robert Stroud (2nd tenor) and Moise Vaughn (baritone and bass).

For rehearsals, they used an indoor swimming pool after it closed for the day - the echo effects emulated the subway stations of New York City.

The 5 Blue Notes were contemporaries of The Mello Moods; there was a parallel development of the two groups from the standpoint that both formed in 1950, had young members in the seventh or eighth grades, and had the same models to follow - especially The Orioles. In fact, Andy even persuaded Sonny Til to bring The Orioles to Francis J.H.S. for a show. The Mello Moods, however, lived in New York then the recording capital of the world and had a record released two years before The 5 Blue Notes.

Although The 5 Blue Notes didn't record professionally as quickly as The Mello Moods, they continued developing their style. The songs they practiced reflected the influence of the most popular groups of the period: BARBRA LEE (Orioles), YES SIR THAT'S MY BABY (5 Keys), DEAREST (Swallows), and COUNT EVERY STAR (Ravens).

In late 1952, the group entered a city-wide amateur contest singing The Royals' A LOVE IN MY HEART. They were so nervous that they left early, certain that they had lost. They subsequently discovered that they won and from that point on the career of The Bluejays began to gather momentum.

Other shows followed, along with "quarter hops" (a party in someone's house where a quarter was charged for admission).

Their passion for singing led them to seek out a studio which would record them cheaply. They found one that only charged \$1.25 per side and they cut 30-40 songs. (Two of these, COULD I ADORE YOU and SWEET PAULINE, have recently been released by Roadhouse Records. They are not only true collectors' items, but beautiful sounds as well - done acapella, with only a hint of a guitar.

At some point they were heard by a Korean War Veteran, Lieutenant Slaughter, who had them rehearse at his home and got them on a Red Cross Tour. This took them to military hospitals in Baltimore, Washington and Virginia singing for the Korean War wounded.

In late 1953 they met William "Bosco" Boyd, who was handling The Clefs and other local groups. He suggested that they try for a recording contract in Chicago. At this time Waymond Mooney left to join the Marines, tenor Jackie Shedrick replaced him, lead tenor Fleming Briscoe was added, and the name of the group was changed to The 5 Blue Notes.

Chicago was a long way from home and five lonely young men

ate fried potatoes and onions three times a day, every day for a month. Finally they got a contract with Chance Records. All four sides, eventually released on the subsidiary Sabre label, were done at one session - as The 5 Blue Notes walked into the studio, The Flamingos were just leaving.

Back home, there was nothing to do but wait. Finally, Andy got fed up and joined the Marines. Then MY GAL IS GONE was released and zoomed to #1 in the D.C. area. Andy, home on leave went to see The 5 Blue Notes at the Howard Theater, where they were to do MY GAL IS GONE with a new lead, Ricky. The group wanted Andy to lead, but when it was discovered that he wasn't a union member, he wasn't allowed on stage! He had to be content with watching from the audience while someone else sang his song with his group.

By the time Andy was discharged in 1958, The 5 Blue Notes had disbanded. He immediately tried to pick up the pieces and got back Stroud, Vaughn, Shedrick and a new lead tenor, Louis Smalls. This group put out one record on the local Onda label. They remained together until

Andy Magruder, lead of the 5 Blue Notes, poses with Les Moskowitz, at the August 1975 show at the Virginia Theater in Alexandria, which featured some of the area's own groups- Clovers, Rainbows, 5 Keys, and Jewels. Extra added attractions were Bull Moose Jackson and The Spaniels.

about 1960, when they broke up for good.

At this time Andy joined The Spaniels, which then consisted of: James "Pookie" Hudson (lead), Ernest Warren (2nd tenor), Andy Magruder (1st tenor), William Carey (baritone), Gerald Gregory (bass) and Pete Simmons (guitar). They picked up a song that Luther Dixon had written for Dee Clark. Andy and Bill Carey worked on it and turned it into I KNOW, the first hit for The Spaniels in a long time. This group stayed together until 1963 and then Andy left.

He had been toying around with going out on his own for a long time and in 1964 he did DO YOU WANTA GO for Chess, under the name Andy Mack. The record did well locally, but Andy feels that it wasn't well promoted.

Andy offers one theory as to why there weren't too many "kid groups" around in the very early 1950's: it was hard for young groups to avoid child labor laws and singing in clubs that served liquor was frowned upon.



DISCOGRAPHY

SABRE

- | | | |
|-----|--|------|
| 103 | MY GAL IS GONE (AM) / OOH BABY (FB) | 1/54 |
| 108 | THE BEAT OF OUR HEARTS (FB) / YOU GOTTA GO BABY (MV) | |

ONDA

- | | | |
|-----|---|------|
| 888 | MY SPECIAL PRAYER (RS) / SOMETHING AWFUL (LS) | 1958 |
|-----|---|------|

CHESS - ANDY MACK

- | | | |
|------|--|------|
| 1910 | DO YOU WANTA GO / LATER THAN YOU THINK (ACCOMPANIED BY THE CARLTONS) | 1964 |
|------|--|------|

AM=ANDY MAGRUDER: FB=FLEMING BRISCOE; MV=MOISE VAUGHN: RS=ROBERT STROUD; LS=LOUIS SMALLS



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THE CARDINALS

By Phil Chaney

Based on interviews with Leon (Tree Top) Hardy and Ernie Warren

The Cardinals were one of the greatest groups to come out of the Baltimore area. Because of my brother's association with their manager, I knew them way back when and have kept in touch with some of the members over the years.

The story of The Cardinals goes back to the years directly after World War II. Around late 1946 or early 1947, Meredith "Prince" Brothers (tenor) and Leon "Tree Top" Hardy (bass) would sing on the corner of Forrest and Gay Streets in East Baltimore. One day while Donald "Jack" Johnson (baritone) was chirping his way to work (at the Super Music Record Shop, only a block and a half away), he passed Jack and Tree Top who invited him to join them in singing the pop hits of the day. They began to call themselves The Mellotones, and soon became a quartet when Jack's friend Ernie Warren was added as lead tenor.

The Mellotones had no aspirations towards being a Rhythm and Blues group. Their idols were all pop groups - The Mills Brothers, The Charioteers, The 4 Tunes, The Ink Spots, even the White Ames Brothers.

To get exposure, they entered amateur shows and sang at bars and a few nightclubs. Songs they liked to sing included THE GYPSY, WITH MY EYES WIDE OPEN I'M DREAMING and one by that new up-and-coming Baltimore group, The Orioles - IT'S TOO SOON TO KNOW. The big time almost came for them when they were entered on The Major Baumgartner Show. (This was a TV amateur show, similar in format to Ted Mack's Original Amateur Hour.) There was another contestant, Jack "Sam" Aydelotte who was a tenor and a guitar player. He agreed to accompany them, but the show ran overtime and none of them got on the air. However it wasn't all bad, because Sam joined the group as the guitarist and also as a fifth voice.

As I mentioned earlier, Jack Johnson worked at Super Music, which was owned by Sam Azrael. He was instrumental in bringing the group to the attention of Atlantic Records' management. In fact, both Ahmet Ertegun and Herb Abramson stopped in at Super Music to hear The Mellotones (they happened to be in Baltimore at the time). That night, The Mellotones left Super Music with a recording contract. An Atlantic press release issued in February 1951 proudly announced the signing of The Mellotones (this from Pate Grendysa). Strangely enough this was the last that was ever heard of them; Atlantic immediately changed their name to The Cardinals. Tree Top says this was due to two reasons - there already was a Mellotones group recording and Atlantic wanted to stay with the "bird group" trend.

Atlantic pianist Jesse Stone worked with the group as arranger on most of their tunes. He was sent down to Baltimore before their first session so that no time would be wasted when the group finally came to New York to record. Since he got them the contract in the first place, Sam Azrael became their manager. He usually stayed in Baltimore, so Prince took over that job on the road.

SHOULDN'T I KNOW sold well and insured The Cardinals bookings for a long while. The Cardinals' first professional appearance was at New York's Apollo Theater. They started at the top!

Gone were the days of The Mellotones and their pop style. Atlantic had laid down the law - R&B ballads with a high tenor lead. (The same thing had happened to The Clovers - only in reverse.)

This group had been recording for about a year, when Ernie Warren was drafted in early 1952. Tenor Luther MacArthur replaced him, but nothing was ever issued with Luther as lead. Another new member was pianist/tenor Leander "Lance" (or "Keys") Tarver, who replaced Sam Aydelotte. Sam was to bounce in and out of the group during the remainder of its stay with Atlantic. After only six months, Luther left and was replaced by James "Little Caesar" Brown. The group's next session, in January 1953 (at which YOU ARE MY ONLY LOVE was recorded), saw Ernie Warren home on leave and present on the recordings. Therefore there are six voices to be heard.

Ernie was discharged in March of 1954 and immediately rejoined his group, "Little Caesar" Brown left, as did Lance Tarver, who was replaced by Johnny Douglas (tenor and guitar). However, as I said before, Sam Aydelotte was in and out of the group, and was on their next session (MISERLOU) instead of Johnny Douglas. Therefore, if you've kept track up through now, MISERLOU has the original group. (They were together until the end, except for the OFF SHORE session which had Johnny Douglas.)

Sam Azrael had been too tied up with his record shop and other businesses to really manage the group full-time. So in 1954, he sold their contract to Lou Karpouzie, a Greek who also managed The Tilters, my brother's band. (Being Greek, he got them to record MISERLOU at their first session in two years. Atlantic's President, Ahmet Ertegun was Turkish and between him and Karpouzie, MISERLOU turned out to have a real Middle Eastern sound. @The use of an oboe helped.)

The Cardinals' biggest seller was THE DOOR IS STILL OPEN. It was on the charts for ten weeks, jumping to the number 10 position. For the year 1955, it was the 43rd best selling record (according to Billboard's R&B charts). According to Ernie, HERE GOES MY HEART TO YOU (which had a misprint on the label - "There" instead of "Here") was called by Atlantic management "Too pretty to sell." They claimed that a record had to have some kind of flaw or else the public wouldn't buy it. Maybe they were right. At any rate it didn't sell.

After the December 1956 session, the group fell apart. Around September 1957 Ernie joined an unnamed group and replaced former Swallows' lead, Eddie Rich, who had gone off to sing with his old pals, The Honey Boys. The other members were Sonny Hatchett (tenor), Jimmy "Ricky" Ricks (tenor - not the famous bass lead of The Ravens), Richard Williams (baritone) and Jim Boone (bass). This is The "Cardinals" group that recorded HAVE I BEEN GONE TOO LONG (released around 1974 on a Bim Bam Boom EP). Incidentally, Boone, Ricks and Williams were alternately singing with Adolphus Holcomb and Pop Diddy as The Kings.

This group didn't stay together long and Ernie soon re-formed The Cardinals in 1958. Jack Johnson, Prince Brothers and Johnny Douglas returned and Jim Boone was persuaded to join as bass (although Leon Hardy was there



THE CARDINALS AT NEW YORK'S PARAMOUNT THEATER:
 Jack Johnson, Ernie Warren, Meredith Brothers, Leon Hardy,
 Sam Aydelotte



THE CARDINALS (1955):
 (TOP) Leon Hardy, Meredith Brothers
 (BOT) Johnny Douglas, Ernie Warren, Jack Johnson

for a while). A second guitarist, Raymond Montague, was added, but Johnny Douglas left.

After being together for a few months, The Cardinals became an integrated group. Four White members were added: Jerry Passion (baritone & guitar), Jerry Donahue (fender bass), Lee Cornell (drums) and Jimmy Harrison (piano). Bob Passion replaced Jerry Donahue and the group played local gigs for over a year. Then the White members left to record on their own as The Tren-Dells (one release on the Tilt label) and The Cardinals became all Black again. They lasted into the early 1960's, when they broke up for good. For one of the finest recording groups the R&B era ever produced, it was, after 16 years - "The End Of The Story."

NOTES ON THE CARDINALS' RECORDINGS

1. Luther MacArthur is the lead on IF YOU SEE MY BABY (unreleased).
2. Lance Tarver is lead on PLEASE BABY and does the bridge on THE BUMP.
3. THE WHEEL OF FORTUNE, picked out for them by Herb Abramson, as a cover to Kay Starr, has a master number that's out of sequence in Atlantic's Master Book, but has the same date as the 646 series. On March 15, 1952 it reached #10 on Billboard's charts, but was then edged out by Dinah Washington's version
4. OFF SHORE was originally master #1908 and Clyde McPhatter's TREASURE OF LOVE was #1905. However, the numbers got reversed during pressing.

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CARDINALS DISCOGRAPHY
MASTER NUMBER ORDER

	MASTER #	RECORDING DATE	RECORD #
SHOULDN'T I KNOW	592	3/51	938
PLEASE DON'T LEAVE ME	593		938
GIVE ME ANOTHER CHANCE	594		-
(GIVE ME) A LITTLE SOMETHING	595		-
I'LL ALWAYS LOVE YOU	646	10/6/51	952
UNDER A BLANKET OF BLUE	647		1025
PRETTY BABY BLUES	648		952
KISS ME BABY	649		958
THE WHEEL OF FORTUNE	775		958
THE BUMP	861	6/21/52	972
IF YOU SEE MY BABY	862		-
THIS CAN'T BE THE END	863		-
SHE ROCKS	864		972
FOR A WHILE	989	1/13/53	-
YOU ARE MY ONLY LOVE	990		995
LOVEY DARLING	991		995
PLEASE BABY	992		1025
MISERLOU	1417	1/18/55	1054
THE DOOR IS STILL OPEN	1418		1054
LOVE CAME TUMBLING DOWN	1419		-
BANG-A-LANG	1420		-
TODAY, TOMORROW, FOREVERMORE	1555	6/2/55	-
YOU WON'T BE TRUE TO YOUR HEART	1556		-
COME BACK MY LOVE	1557		1067
TWO THINGS I LOVE	1558		1067
CHOO CHOO	1683	11/2/55	1090
I WON'T MAKE YOU CRY ANYMORE	1684		1103
HERE GOES MY HEART TO YOU	1685		1079
LOVELY GIRL	1686		1079
OFF SHORE (SEE NOTE 4)	1905	3/1/56	1090
THE END OF THE STORY	1909		1103
THE SHOW IS ALL OVER	1910		-
NEKI HOKI	1911		-
ONE LOVE	2265	12/13/56	1126
NEAR YOU	2266		1126
LET THE SUNSHINE SHINE ON YOU	2267		-

ATLANTIC	RECORD NUMBER ORDER	RELEASE DATE
938	SHOULDN'T I KNOW/PLEASE DON'T LEAVE ME	5/51
952	I'LL ALWAYS LOVE YOU/PRETTY BABY BLUES	11/51
958	WHEEL OF FORTUNE/KISS ME BABY	2/52
972	THE BUMP/SHE ROCKS	8/52
995	LOVEY DARLING/YOU ARE MY ONLY LOVE	5/53
1025	PLEASE BABY/UNDER A BLANKET OF BLUE	4/54
1054	THE DOOR IS STILL OPEN/MISERLOU	3/55
1067	COME BACK MY LOVE/TWO THINGS I LOVE	7/55
1079	HERE GOES MY HEART TO YOU/LOVELY GIRL	12/55
1090	OFF SHORE/CHOO CHOO	3/56
1103	THE END OF THE STORY/I WON'T MAKE YOU CRY ANYMORE	8/56
1126	ONE LOVE/NEAR YOU	1/57

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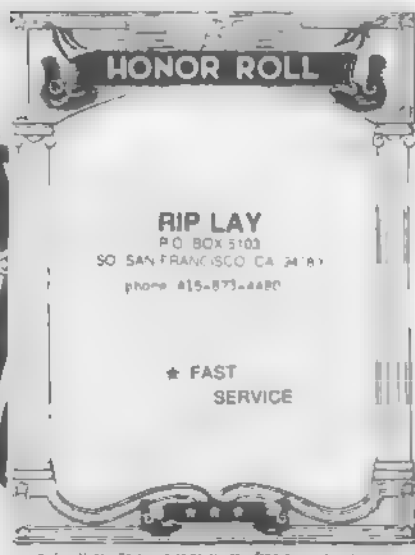
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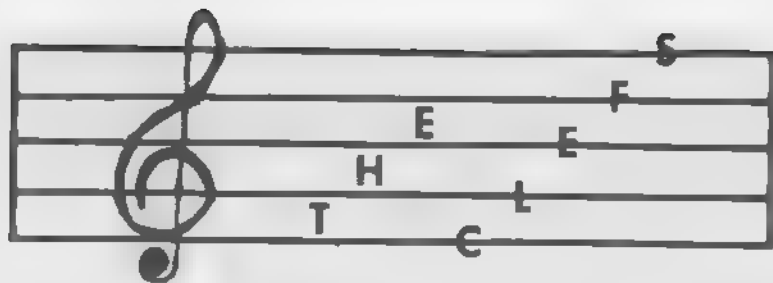
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THE SENSATIONS / YOU MADE ME LOVE YOU / ATCO 6090 \$4 (maroon)
RAL DOWNER / IT'S A SAD WAY TO LOVE SOMEONE / GONE 5125 \$4
JIMMY CLANTON / I JUST WANNA MAKE LOVE / ACE 622 \$3 (PICTURE COVER)
COUNTRY HAWKS / WALKIN' WITH ELOISE / EMI 5977 \$3 (PIC COVER - PAUL McCARTNEY & HIS DAD)
HUEY SMITH & CLOWNS / DEAREST DARLING / ACE 571 \$3
(EP) THE DEL VIKINGS / COME GO WITH US / DOT 1058 \$8 (PICTURE COVER-4 SONGS)
THE DREAMLOVERS / MAY I KISS THE BRIDE / V-TONE 229 \$3
MAURICE WILLIAMS & THE INSPIRATIONS / THE DAY HAS COME / CANDO 1031 \$4
JOHNNY BURNETTE / FOUNTAIN OF LOVE / SARARA 512 \$4
RICHARD BERRY / BESAME MUCHO / FLIP 339 \$3
THE SKYLINERS / LOWKEY WAY / CALICO 109 \$3
HUEY SMITH / BEHIND THE WHEEL / IMPERIAL 5747 \$3
THE EVERLY BROTHERS / SONGS DAD DADDY TAUGHT US / CADENCE 110 (EP) \$5 (PIC COVER)
ELVIS PRESLEY / INDESCRIBABLY BLUE / RCA 9056 \$3 (PIC COVER) black label
(EP) THE 5 SATINS / VOL. #2 / EMER 101 \$5 (PIC COVER-2nd press)
(EP) THE 5 SATINS / VOL. #3 / EMER 102 \$5 (PIC COVER-2nd press)
(EP) JOHNNY TILLOTSON / GREATEST HITS / CADENCE 2 (PIC COVER) 6 songs \$5
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FREDDY CANNON / HAPPY SHADES OF BLUE / SWAN 4057 \$3 (PIC COVER)
(EP) BRENDA LEE / EVERYBODY LOVES ME BUT YOU / DECCA 2725 \$4 (PIC COVER)
(EP) THE FOUR SEASONS / SING / VEE JAY 901 \$3 (PIC COVER)
(EP) CARL PERKINS / BLUE SUEDE SHOES / SUN 115 \$15 (PIC COVER)
THE MOONGLAWS / MAMA LOCCIE / CHESS 1738 \$3 (silver side)
JAN & DEAN / JENNY LEE / UNITED ARTISTS 49849 \$2 (PIC COVER)
DANNY & THE JUNIORS / MISTER WHISPER / SWAN 4072 \$2
FATS DOMINO / I CAN'T TON IN / IMPERIAL 5369 \$3 (shiny red)
MERRILL MOORE / BUTTERMILK BARY / CAPITOL 1748 \$5
(EP) JIMMY CLANTON / GREATEST HITS / ACE 102 \$6 (PIC COVER)
(EP) FRANKIE FORD / GREATEST HITS / ACE 105 \$5 (PIC COVER)
(EP) JIMMY CLANTON / ALWAYS CHASING RAINBOWS / ACE 103 \$6 (PIC COVER)
THE CHANTELS / LOOK IN MY EYES / CARLTON 555 \$2
BOBBY LEE TRAMMELL / YOUR THE MOSTEST GIRL / CAPITOL 3801 \$1
JERRY LEE LEWIS / HANG UP MY ROCK N ROLL SHOES / SUN 344 \$2
RAL DOWNER / YOU FINALLY SAID SOMETHING GOOD / FONTANA 1507 \$3
ELVIS PRESLEY / THERE'S ALWAYS ME / RCA 9287 \$3 (PIC COVER)
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MARVEL FELTS / CUTIE BABY / PINK 701 \$3
MARVEL FELTS / MONEY LOVE / PINK 702 \$3
WICKY & SYLVIA / DARLING I MISS YOU SO / KING 6006 \$2
MAC CURTIS / DISTOL PACKIN' MAMA / RAMWOOD 1017 \$1 (ROCKS)
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By Marv Goldberg
Based on an interview with Scotty Mansfield

The Clefs were one of the many groups from the Washington, D.C. area that flourished in the early and mid 1950's. They formed in 1951, while attending high school in Arlington, Virginia. They originally got together to sing THE LORD'S PRAYER for an assembly program, and this led to continued singing after school.

The Six Clefs were: Scotty Mansfield (lead tenor), Pavel Bess (tenor), Frankie Newman (2nd tenor), Fred Council (baritone), Gerald Bullock (bass), and Leo Carter (guitar). James Sheppard (2nd tenor and baritone) was a utility replacement when someone couldn't make a gig and Leroy Flack had replaced Bullock as bass by the time of their first recording.

Everyone in the area tried to emulate the sound of The Orioles and The Clefs were no exception. However they always tried to have their own sound and practiced anything that seemed to fit, such as The Dominoes' WHEN THE SWALLOWS COME BACK TO CAPIS-TRANO and Edna McGriff's HEAVENLY FATHER.

For about a year The Clefs appeared locally - on radio shows, a TV show, school functions, and even a boat ride featuring The Orioles (no money, but good exposure). But these appearances were only secondary; their primary goal was to shape and refine their sound for the purpose of recording.

Finally, in 1952, they made some demos at U.S. Recording Studios. These were heard by Lillian Claiborne who contacted the group and ended up managing

them and bringing them to the attention of Phil Chess.

Today Lillian Claiborne is somewhat revered as a discoverer and recorder of dozens of D.C. groups, although she was in her mid-60's at the time. Scotty says, however, that after considering it for years, he now does not think she was too good a manager. True, she had an impressive roster of talent, but none of them ever made it really big. (The closest she came was getting The Heartbreakers a contract with RCA - where they bombed.) She recorded everyone in sight, but released relatively little of the material. There were many potential hits locked away in her vaults, but most of the masters were mediocre at best.

WE THREE was suggested to the group by Scotty's sister, who liked The Ink Spots' version of it. Although never really a hit, The Clefs got about two years worth of bookings out of it. They recorded another master - SORRY - which Lillian Claiborne said Chess wasn't interested in. Some years later, Phil Chess claimed that he had never received any further Clefs' masters. Scotty doesn't know who to believe. At this time a reorganization of the group took place. Leroy Flack was missing gigs (and even missed the photo session), so it was decided to move Pavel Bess from tenor to bass. Guitarist Leo Carter left somewhere between the Chess and Peacock recordings, since he was a family man and didn't want to travel.

In 1955, The Clefs decided to



THE CLEFS (1955):

Fred Council, Frank Newman, Frank Motley (Dual Trumpeter), Scotty Mansfield,
Pavel Bess

(BOT) Leo Carter

break away from Lillian Claiborne. They got a new manager, William "Bosco" Boyd, who immediately tried to negotiate a new deal with Chess. For about two years The Clefs had been touring and playing local gigs in an attempt to stockpile original material (since this was what record companies were looking for). They sent a tape of four songs: DRIVE THOSE TEARS FROM MY EYES, WHISKEY! WHISKEY! WHISKEY!, SWEETHEART, and STILL RIDING, to Don Robey of Peacock Records, who sent them back a two-year contract to be signed. Just to see what else was around, they journeyed to Chicago and auditioned for VeeJay and once again, Chess. They were offered a contract at VeeJay too, but decided to go with Peacock after talking with Willie Mae Thornton. In light of subsequent events, Scotty thinks they would have been wiser to have signed with Vee Jay.

In Chicago they discovered that a phoney "Clefs" group had worked the beaches and other spots in the area. The story was hard to believe until The Clefs did a show at The Persian Ballroom with Faye Adams and a bootleg Counts group, doing DARLING DEAR. Six months later, they met the real Counts at a show in D.C. This may be a whole new area to explore in the history of Rhythm 'n' Blues. At the time that they switched over to Peacock, Scotty took over managerial functions too, since "Bosco" had disappeared.

The Clefs recorded many masters for Peacock, only two of which were ever released. After seeing that they weren't really going any place, they decided a name change might help them make a new start. The group thus became Scotty Mann and The Masters. Under this name they recorded four more masters for Peacock, which ironically released the two which did not feature Scotty in the lead.

The problem with Peacock was that Robey didn't like or possibly didn't understand their sound and material, which was East-coast oriented. Robey dealt more with Southern blues artists and tried to get The Clefs to alter their style. This resulted in sessions which were compromises that pleased nobody. (This is why Scotty thinks The Clefs would have been better off at VeeJay - the Chicago sound was similar to what they had been doing.) Strangely enough, Robey wouldn't let them out of their contract when Verve Records showed some interest.

Disillusioned, The Masters/Clefs played local gigs while trying to work around Army inductions (it seemed as if the Army discharged one only to take another). Finally around 1960, after almost 10 years of not making it big, the group quietly fell apart. Everyone had other jobs by this time and the music business had lost its allure.

Scotty sums up the story of The Clefs: "In retrospect, I honestly believe that the public never really heard us at our best on record. I believe we recorded too early. There's a fine line that separates perfection from raw potential. I think we were exposed on record during the time we were merely showing potential. There is a refined difference between WE THREE and I'LL BE WAITING. We were close to perfection on the unreleased YOUR MEMORY. I honestly believe we reached our peak of perfection three or four years later, but by this time, the urge to relate had subsided."

DISCOGRAPHY

CHESS

1521 WE THREE (SM)/RIDE ON (SM) 1952
PEACOCK

1643 I'LL BE WAITING (SM)/ 1955
PLEASE DON'T LEAVE ME (PB)

1665 THE MYSTERY MAN (PB)/JUST A
LITTLE BIT OF LOVING (FC) - AS
SCOTTY MANN & MASTERS.

LEADS: SM=SCOTTY MANSFIELD, PB =
PAVEL BESS; FC = FRED COUNCIL.

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LUNDEE DUNDEE - VERSATILES
GIRLIE THAT I LOVE - CELLOS
DINGA LING A DING DONG-BING BONGS
MARIE (ACAP) - HARPTONES
SHOULD I CRY - CONCORDS
HONEY IN THE ROCK - LARKS
CRYING - PYRAMIDS
SNOW WHITE - DEVOTIONS
GLORIA - ESCORTS
CHRISTMAS PRAYER - PENGUINS
WILL YOU BE MINE - PENGUINS
BE MY GIRL - TONY & TWILITERS
HEY THERE - TWILITERS

HOW CAN I WIN - HI FIVES
RUN BETTY RUN - VAN DYKES
COME ON BABY - VAN DYKES
TERESA - TREBLE CHORDS
CHILDISH WAYS - SUDDENS
PLEASE DON'T CHEAT ON ME - SINCERES
TINY CLOUD - ELEGANTS
A GIRL NAMED ARLENE - TOKENS
WPLJ - 4 DEUCES
I GET THE FEELING - PYRAMIDS
WAITING WAITING - 5 BILLS
PS I LOVE YOU - CLASSICS
CAN I COME OVER TONITE - VELOURS
IT ONLY HAPPENS WITH YOU - PENGUINS
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UNDER THE DOUBLE EAGLE/GUITAR BOOGIE - ARTHUR SMITH
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TEN LITTLE BOTTLES/HOT ROD LINCOLN - JOHNNY BOND
GIVE ME 40 ACRES/TRUCK DRIVERS QUEEN - THE WILLIS BROTHERS
OLD RATTLER/MOUNTAIN DEW - GRANDPA JONES
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CHERRY RED/PERSON TO PERSON - EDDIE "CLEANHEAD" VINSON
TALK TO ME/LET THEM TALK - LITTLE WILLIE JOHN
THE TWIST/TEARDROPS ON YOUR LETTER - H.BALLAD & MIDNIGHTERS
IVORY TOWER/TWO HEARTS - OTIS WILLIAMS & CHARMS
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BOWLEGGED WOMAN/I CAN'T GO ON WITHOUT YOU-BULL"MOOSE"JACKSON
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"REVIEWING THE 5 KEYS"

By Anthony Barcia

Billboard's Rating System:

1-39 = "Poor"
40-69 = "Satisfactory"
70-79 = "Good"
80-89 = "Excellent"
90-100 = "Tops"

May 5, 1951

WITH A BROKEN HEART (Aladdin 3085) - 84

Group gets a load of feeling into a likely slow ballad; lead tenor shows an expressive style. Rest of group puts down neat harmony.

b/w

TOO LATE - 70

Boys aren't as mellow with this slow blues.

December 8, 1951

OLD MACDONALD (Aladdin 3113) - 69

The familiar folk ditty is handed a rocking reading from the group with a few lyric modernizations adding spice to the proceedings.

b/w

IT'S CHRISTMAS TIME - 69

A pleasant new seasonal ballad is given a warmly blended reading by the group.

April 12, 1952

BE ANYTHING (BUT BE MINE) (Aladdin 3127) - 71

The 5 Keys, using a style somewhat similar to The Ink Spots, do an adequate job.

b/w

RED SAILS IN THE SUNSET - 78

The 5 Keys give the old fave a mighty strong reading. This one could do well.

May 31, 1952

HOW LONG (Aladdin 3131) - 82

Fine performance by The Five Keys on a moody ballad with a melodic strain. The tenor lead turns in a warm vocal. Tune could go as pop.

b/w

MISTAKES - 75

The boys give a fairly straight,

smooth reading to the oldie doubling the tempo for the second chorus.

July 19, 1952

I HADN'T ANYONE TILL YOU (Aladdin 3136) - 78

A smooth, stylish performance of the Ray Noble evergreen by the boys. With the fine lead singing the tune over a humming background over quiet ork support. A good disk.

b/w

HOLD ME - 83

The Keys take the oldie and give it a mighty strong performance with the lead socking over the lyrics at a spirited tempo, while the ork supports the group with a solid beat.

November 1, 1952

I CRIED FOR YOU (Aladdin 3158) - 80

The evergreen is given a sensitive reading by the lead singer with humming support from the rest of the group. It's a fine waxing which their fans will like.

b/w

SERVE ANOTHER ROUND - 80

The Keys have an interesting bit of material here which they hand an intriguing interpretation. It builds well with the ork blending in effectively. Something could happen here.

February 14, 1953

COME GO MY BAIL LOUISE (Aladdin 3167) - 74

A driving blues receives a loud and chaotic rendition with shouts, whistles, yells, etc. from the group, with the ork adding a good beat. Side should grab a few coins.

b/w

CAN'T KEEP FROM CRYING - 65

Not much here. The Keys are unimpressive on this slight blue opus.

April 18, 1953

MAMA, YOUR DAUGHTER TOLD A LIE ON ME (Aladdin 3175) - 74

Quick follow-up on the "Mama-Daughter" material currently making noise. Sounds like an effective hunk of wax for the group. Big beat and the group's sound are strong.

b/w

THERE OUGHT TO BE A LAW (AGAINST
BREAKING A HEART) - 67

The boys try hard, but the material may be a bit too pop-like for their style and their market.

* * * * *

May 30, 1953

THESE FOOLISH THINGS (Aladdin
3190) - 73

Group interprets the old standard in their own individual manner - their fans should like.

b/w

LONESOME OLD STORY - 71

Lead singer wails a sad story to mournful backing.

* * * * *

September 26, 1953

I'M SO HIGH (Aladdin 3204) - 74

Relaxed chanting marks this item which should prove of some attraction to jazz buyers, as well as strictly R'n'B trade. The lead voice of The Five Keys is backed by a rhythmic vocal arrangement.

b/w

TEARDROPS IN YOUR EYES - 72

Slow tender ballad rendered with gentle emotion by The Keys.

* * * * *

December 12, 1953

OH BABE (Aladdin 3214) - 74

The 5 Keys who have been without a hit for a long time, have a listenable slicing here, one that could get some action even tho it is not nearly as frantic as their past sides. The boys sing it well, and the ork punches out the rhythm.

b/w

MY SADDEST HOUR - 74

The boys get a bit wild here as they sing this new ballad with all the stops pulled out. It has a lot to it, and it too, should pull spins.

* * * * *

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March 27, 1954

SOMEDAY, SWEETHEART (Aladdin
3228) - 79

The pop evergreen is sold with taste here by The 5 Keys, sparked by some fine tenor lead work. With the action on pop-styled ballads in the field, this one has a chance for coins. It is one of the best cuttings by the group in a while.

b/w

LOVE MY LOVING - 65

Routine blues receives a good warble from the lead singer, while the boys sing harmony behind him. The backing piano and voices is rather unusual, but it doesn't come off.

* * * * *

June 26, 1954

HOW DO YOU EXPECT ME TO GET IT?
(Aladdin 3245) - 72

Ditty out a few months ago receives a lively reading by the boys over a good beat by the ork. Could get box plays.

b/w

DEEP IN MY HEART - 69

The Keys do an okay job here with a pop-styled ballad. The group backs the lead singers smoothly.

* * * * *

Disks that were not reviewed are as follows:

GLORY OF LOVE (Aladdin 3099)

YES SIR, THAT'S MY BABY (Aladdin
3118)

DARLING (Aladdin 3119)

I'LL ALWAYS BE IN LOVE WITH YOU
(Aladdin 3182)

MY LOVE (Aladdin 3263)

STORY OF LOVE (Aladdin 3312)

Often it didn't matter what the rating was. A recording could receive a "65" and still become a hit.



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+ or - used in conjunction with the above to connote better-or-worse-than condition.

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Aladdin	5 Keys	Someday Sweetheart	VG+	80
Aladdin	5 Keys	Story of Love	M	50
Jax	Kings	Sunday Kind of Love (Red Wax)	VG+	50
Aladdin	5 Pearls	Please Let Me Know (Orange Lab)	M	30
Apollo	Gentlemen	Tired of You	M	25
States	Strollers	In Your Dreams	VG+	30
Atlantic	Clovers	Skyline	VG+	60
Drexel	Gaynotes	Pu Pu Pa Doo	M	100
Decca	Mello-Tones	I'm Just Another One In Love	M	80
		With You (Pink DJ)	M	80

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Fury 1017	Southwinds	Build Me A Cabin (Spiritual)	M	
Marvello 5001	Populairs	I Lost My Heart/Island Paradise	M	
Ping 1000	De-Bonairs	Mother's Son/Lanky Linda	M	
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Keen 3-2008	Sam Cooke	Blue Moon (Multi Col. Lab.)	M	5
Herald 458	Turbans	When You Dance (WOL)	VG	3
Jubilee 5266	Bob Whalen	Chapel Of The Rosas	M	6
Gee 1011	Cletones	Little Girl of Mine	VG+	4
Liberty 806	Slades	You Mean Everything To Me (Grn)	VG+	2
Guyden 705	Esquire Boys	Rock-a-Beatin' Boogie (Orig Vars)	VG	15
Decca 868101	Bill Haley	Dis, Dis The Lights	M	4
Bell 5272	Edna McGriff	Born To Be With You	M	3
Savoy 1506	Happy Brown/Zippers	Quartet-I'm Getting Lonesome	VG+	3
Atlantic 1909	Clyde McPhatter	Treasure of Love	M	4
Coed 506	Cresta	Sixteen Candles	VG+	2
Josie 880	Chaperones	Cruise To The Moon	M	5
American Arts 6	Volumes	I Can't Live Without You (Rare)	M	10
Decca 87922	Bill Haley	Razle Dazle	M	5
Kapp 490	Emotions	Echo/Come Dance Baby	M	8
Gee 1018	F.Lynn/Tenagers	Who Can Explain?	VG+	4

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Cadence 1310	Metromoms	I Love My Girl	M	10
Chart 605	Swagmoms	Vary Truly Yours	M	20
Colpix 651	Marcelo	Friendly Loves	M	5
Cub 9014	Velours	Crazy Love	M	8
Dragon 10205	Bing Bonga	Ding-a-Ling-along-Ding Dong	VG+	20
Ember 1011	Starlites (Dreams)	They Call Me A Dreamer	VG+	20
End 1012	Uniques	Tell The Angels	M	20
Guyden 2029	Fantasys	No One But You	VG+	12
Jozie 801	Emmons	Blue Moon	VG+	15
KT 201	Harptones	Sunset	M	10
Maestro 409	Orchids	Stormy Weather	M	20
Mercury 70060	Ravens	Don't Mention My Name	M	30
M-G-M 12666	Serenaders	Give Me A Girl	VG-	15
Neil 100	Young Lads	I'm In Love	VG	15
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Essex (EP-102)	Bill Haley	Dance Party (with cover)	G+	
Essex	Bill Haley/Comets	Rock The Joint	M	
Gotham	Les Andrews/Hearts	Bluebird of Happiness	VG	
Imperial	Jewels	Hearts Can Be Broken	M	
Imperial	Spiders	She Keeps Me Wondering	G+	
Jax	Bobby Ball/Kings	Sunday Kind of Love (Red Wax)	M	
King	Checkers	White Cliffs of Dover	VG+	
Mercury	Ravens	She's Got To Go (WOL)	VG	
Old Town	Solitaires	The Honeycomb	VG-	
Rello	Richie/Royals	And When I'm Near You	M	
RnB	Jewels	Hearts of Stone (WOL)	M	
Savoy	4 Buddies	My Mother's Eyes	VG+	

BITS & PIECES

By Marcia Vance

At press time, Jackie Wilson is in critical condition due to a heart attack suffered while performing in a club in Cherry Hill, New Jersey.....The Clovers are recording for the re-activated Aladdin label. New release is BUMP JIVE

Good new acappella album from Stormy Weather entitled NO BAND. Lead singer of the group is Henry Farag, who produced The Spaniels on Canterbury and The Drifters on Steel Town.....Our best wishes go out to Alan Lee and his new record store - Roadhouse Oldies, located at 5200 Ritchie Highway in Baltimore, Md.

18 WITH A BULLET by Pete Wingfield on Island doing incredibly well. How come we can't get an American record with that sound?

(Cont'd. from p. 3)

"Waxie Maxie") was sort of a local talent scout, referring singers to labels and vice versa.

But while a New York group could seek an audition for the cost of a subway token, a Baltimore or Washington group had to work a lot harder. There are tales of The Orioles pulling up to the Apollo in a 1934 car which looked so sorry, theater owner Frank Schiffman auditioned them out of pity.

Many groups, it's probably safe to assume, weren't so intent they would invest the time or money to gamble for a break in New York. They sang at home, they made a little money, it was fun, they were happy. They graduated from school and got real jobs.

Some samples of what R&B fans missed - crude but tantalizing - can be found in old tapes issued recently by Les Moskowitz, a Washington collector, with help from Mrs. Claiborne and others.

Mike Redmond and Marv Goldberg have already, in past articles, run through histories of The Orioles, Clovers, Jets, etc. Between those stories and these presented here, an impressive case is made for the importance of Baltimore and Washington in the history of the "New York Sound."

Esther Phillips out with a smash of the old Dinah Washington-WHAT A DIFFERENCE A DAY MAKES.....Dee Clark has a new single on Chel-sea entitled RIDE A WILD HORSE..

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 ELVIS BY REQUEST - COMPACT 33 RPM - RCA 128
 IT'S YOU I LOVE - CROOM BROTHERS - VEEJAY 283
 ON THE STREET WHERE YOU LIVE - CHUCKLES - WEST SIDE 1019
 EACH TIME - CABINEERS - PRESTIGE 904
 I MISS YOU SO - CATS & FIDDLE - FCA 4393
 TOUGH TIMES - JOHN BRIM - PARROT 799
 JAILBIRD - SMILEY LEWIS - IMPERIAL 5325
 I'VE BEEN DECEIVED - C. FEATHERS - SUN 503
 IN YOUR DREAMS - STROLLERS - STATES 163
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CLOSING CHORDS

We recently received two newspaper articles from Marty Kugell (founder and producer of The 5 Satins and The Nutmegs). The articles spoke about the death of Leroy McNeil, bass of The Nutmegs, from a stabbing incident. However, there was almost no mention of Leroy's singing career; prompting the following from Marty.....

You may not have known him personally but I'm sure you will remember the voice from such

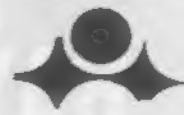
classics as COMIN' HOME, STORY UNTOLD, I FELL IN LOVE, SHIFTING SANDS and all but a few of The Nutmeg accappella things that I cut with them.

It certainly won't do Leroy or The Nutmegs any good now for someone to write a long obituary but God damn, he certainly deserved more than the enclosed.

In my opinion, Leroy McNeil was the finest Bass voice I've ever had the pleasure of working with. He will always be #1 in my book.....

(That says it all - Ed.)

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